



United States Mission to the OSCE

Appointment of the OSCE Anti-Trafficking Special Representative

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 13, 2004

I thank you, Mr. Chairman,

We too would like to welcome the appointment of Helga Konrad as the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

As you know, we strongly supported the creation of this position, as well as of the Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit, which together form the Anti-Trafficking Mechanism.

We hope that this Mechanism will soon be up and running and fulfilling its mandate. We all need to ensure that it has the political support and the resources to carry out that mandate.

Success of the Mechanism will depend on how much we use it - and I believe we all could benefit from its assistance - as well as on the leadership of Dr. Konrad and her team. We of course continue to support the work being done by other OSCE structures to combat trafficking in persons as well.

A major task of the Special Representative is to coordinate OSCE anti-trafficking activities within the Organization as well as with other international organizations active on the issue. We hope that Dr. Konrad will now begin the process of working with the various OSCE Institutions and structures and participating States to outline priorities for OSCE anti-trafficking work. Our anti-trafficking activities in all the three dimensions should form a reinforcing and coherent strategy to combat this scourge.

We also hope that Dr. Konrad will begin discussions with various participating States - including my own - to see how the OSCE could be of assistance in fulfilling our own goals of combating trafficking in human beings. We believe the anti-trafficking Mechanism created in Maastricht should serve as a platform for OSCE technical expertise, advice and assistance also in States that do not currently host OSCE field presences.

OSCE members represent the perspectives of source, transit and destination countries. From countries with push factors creating opportunities for traffickers, to countries with pull factors driving the demand, the new OSCE mechanism should be able to communicate the range of problems and strategize effective solutions for countries in each phase of the trafficking problem.

One issue we would like to stress is the responsibility of the Mechanism to organize an annual meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators here in Vienna. We believe this meeting can strengthen cooperation and coordination among all OSCE participating States. We hope that Dr. Konrad will make planning the 2004 meeting a priority, and we also hope that all States will participate.

Thank you very much.